

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
SAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 /070 W  
-----041666 241844Z /43  
P R 241730Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6687  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 2779

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN; USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO; PANCANAL FOR IO

EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SOPN, PN  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTIONS

FOLG SENT ACTION PRIORITY USINFO WASHDC INFO SECSTATE WASHDC  
P R 241720Z APR 78 FROM USIS/PANAMA RPTD YOUR ACTION/INFO

QUOTE  
UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2

EO 11652: N/A

MEDIA REACTION

1. PANAMA CITY.--COMMENTARY ON CANAL TREATIES SHARPLY DOWN IN WEEKEND AND APRIL 24 PRESS, WITH APRIL 24 MORNINGS DEVOTING EDITS TO NEW HOUSING AND HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. APRIL 22 MEDIA GIVES HEAVY PLAY TO TORRIJOS INVITATION TO PRES. CARTER FOR MAY 12, BUT APRIL 23 AND 24 PRESS HAS LITTLE OR NO FOLLOW-UP.

2. APRIL 22 MATUTINO BANNERS HEAD "CARTER WILL COME AND WILL  
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GET TO KNOW THE SOUL OF THIS NATION," UNDER EIGHT-COLUMN PHOTO OF GEN. TORRIJOY AT INAUGURATION OF HOUSING PROJECT, WHERE HE ANNOUNCED INVITATION. IN HIS TALK, TORRIJOS SAID CARTER WOULD STAY "SEVERAL HOURS WITH US. I AM TRYING TO MAKE IT 48 HOURS SO HE WILL GET TO KNOW THE SOUL OF THIS NATION." TORRIJOS ASKED CROWD TO GREET CARTER WITH JOY, BECAUSE PRESIDENT IS "MAN WHO JUMPED ALONE WITH THE PARACHUTE

OF DIGNITY AND LANDED ON THE MARK. HE WAS A BRAVE MAN."

3. MATUTINO APRIL 22 EDIT HAILS TREATIES AS SIGN TO WORLD THAT "NEGOTIATION, SERENE, COMPREHENSIVE AND RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE (IS) A VALID SYSTEM TO APPLY WHEN IT IS A QUESTION OF BUILDING BRIDGES OVER WIDE, APPARENTLY INSOLUBLE DIFFERENCES, IF THE INTERESTED PARTIES CONTRIBUTE...THE COMPREHENSION, RESPECT AND GOOD WILL WHICH WERE PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE PANAMA-U.S. PROCESS...IT IS POSSIBLE THROUGH PEACEFUL PATHS TO ACHIEVE SUPERIOR RESULTS FROM THOSE WHICH ARMED CONFLICT CAN BRING."

4. MATUTINO COLUMNIST AND LAWYER MIGUEL MORENO, WHO HAS DEVOTED SEVERAL COLUMNS TO SEVERE CRITICISM OF TREATIES AND THEIR ACCEPTANCE BY TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT, LEAVES TREATY THEME APRIL 22 AND WRITES OF POLITICAL EXILES INVITED TO RETURN TO GOP. MORENO POINTS OUT THAT MOST EXILES WERE BANNED WITHOUT FORMAL GOP DECREE, AND THEREFORE CAN BE BROUGHT BACK BY SAME MEANS, "BY VIRTUE OF THE FACT THAT THE CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT MAKES AT ANY MOMENT OFFICIAL DECISIONS WITHOUT NEEDING SPECIAL DECREES, AND THESE DECISIONS HAVE THE FORCE OF LAW."

5. THEREFORE, MORENO CONCLUDES, "THE EXILES SHOULD TAKE REFUGE IMMEDIATELY THE AUTHORIZATION TO RETURN...AND SHOULD FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IT IS NOT A TRICK, SINCE THE CURRENT SITUATION WOULD NOT PERMIT...A FELONY OF SUCH MAGNITUDE...I BELIEVE THAT WHEN THE CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT SAID THAT THE

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AUTHORIZATION WAS WITHOUT CONDITIONS, THAT MEANS THAT THOSE WHO RETURN CAN FREELY DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THE ACTIVITIES WHICH DEMOCRACY PERMITS. ...SINCE IF IT WERE NOT SO THE RETURN WOULD BE A CHARADE. THUS THE EXILES SHOULD COME AND ORGANIZE THEIR POLITICAL, CIVIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES...WITH ALL CONFIDENCE."

6. PANAMANIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COLUMN IN APRIL 24 ESTRELLA WELCOMES RETURN OF EXILES: "THE RETURN OF ALL THOSE WHO FOR REASONS AGAINST THEIR WILL WERE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY, FILLS US WITH SATISFACTION, SINCE IT REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MOST INTIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR COMMUNITY...WE HAVE HOPE THAT THIS ACTION WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OPTIMISM REQUIRED IN THESE HISTORIC MOMENTS AND CAN MARK A STEP OF PARTICIPATION IN THE NATION'S DEVELOPMENT OF ALL THE INTELLECTUAL, PROFESSIONAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES ON WHICH WE PANAMANIAN CAN AND SHOULD COUNT."

7. GOVERNMENT OWNED RADIO LIBERTAD IN WEEKEND COMMENTARY REPRINTED IN APRIL 24 MATUTINO ANALYZES REASONS FOR FAVORABLE TREATY VOTE IN SENATE. COMMENTARY CONGRATULATES PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT FOR NOT IMMEDIATELY REJECTING TREATIES WHEN RESERVATIONS WERE FIRST ADDED: "SOME, IMPATIENT AND LARGELY

WELL INTENTIONED, DEMANDED THAT OMAR AND THE GOVERNMENT TAKE AN IMMEDIATE POSITION. THIS, NEVERTHELESS, WAS NOT ADVISABLE, AS WE COULD JUDGE SHORTLY THEREAFTER. THE POSITION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT WAS JUST AND PRECISE: TO PROSCRIBE ALL PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS THAT WOULD HAVE PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF PROVOCATION..."

8. THAT FINAL VOTE WAS FAVORABLE WAS NO ACCIDENT, SAYS RADIO LIBERTAD: "THIS TURN OF EVENTS CAME ABOUT BECAUSE THE U.S. UNDERSTOOD THAT BEHIND OMAR AND THE NATIONAL GUARD SPOKE AN ENTIRE NATION WHICH, BEFORE LIVING ON ITS KNEES UNDER U.S. COLONIALISM, WOULD PREFER TO DIE IN COMBAT...(RESULT WAS ALSO DUE) TO THE SOLID AND SIGNIFICANT POSITION TAKEN BY VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD...WHO LET WASHINGTON KNOW THAT THEY

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WERE WITH US IN THE STRUGGLE FOR OUR DIGNITY AS MEN AND OUR INTEGRITY AS SOVEREIGN TERRITORY."

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
SAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 /070 W  
-----041698 241844Z /43

P R 241730Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6688  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 PANAMA 2779

9. MATUTINO COLUMNIST LUIS RESTREPO, WHO HAS FREQUENTLY CRITICIZED TREATIES WITH RESERVATIONS, APRIL 24 COMMENTS ON U.S. CONSERVATIVES' ATTEMPTS TO SCUTTLE TREATIES, AND THEIR POSSIBLE FUTURE SUCCESS WITH SALT TREATY. HE CONCLUDES THEY WILL HAVE LESS SUCCESS THAN WITH PANAMA TREATY: "SURELY IN THE KREMLIN THEY WILL NEVER ALLOW U.S. SENATORS OVERRUN SOVIET TERRITORY INSPECTING EVERYTHING AND TRYING TO IMPOSE THEIR POINTS OF VIEW

IN ALL AREAS OF NATIONAL LIFE, AS HAPPENED IN PANAMA WHERE THEY ARRIVED LIKE MEMBERS OF THE INQUISITION, CRITICIZING, SUGGESTING CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND EVEN INDICATING THE CONDIMENTS WHICH SHOULD BE ADDED TO PANAMANIAN FOOD."

10. RESTREPO CONTINUES "THE MORAL OFFENSES WHICH WERE INFLICTED ON PANAMA ARE REPREHENSIBLE...NOT EVEN AGAINST NATIONS VANQUISHED BY THE BARBARIAN HORDES HAVE THEY IMPOSED SITUATIONS LIKE THESE. IF THESE SECTORS BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN DO THE SAME THING WITH THE USSR, THEY ARE GREATLY MISTAKEN. FRANKLY I WOULD LIKE TO TALK NO MORE OF THESE THINGS, SINCE WE PANAMANIAN HAVE GREAT TASKS AHEAD OF US AND WE SHOULD DEDICATE OUR EFFORTS POSITIVELY TO DIRECT THE NATION TOWARD CONCRETE GOALS. BUT CERTAINLY ONE MUST RESPOND TO THE DIATRIBE, SINCE IF NOT, THEY WOULD THINK THAT WITH OUR SILENCE WE WERE ACCEPTING IT AS TRUTH."

1. APRIL 23 PRO-GOP DOMINICAL CARRIES SPECIAL 12-PAGE SECTION  
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OF PHOTOS, MAPS AND TEXT, ON "OMAR TORRIJOS, BELISARIO PORRAS AND THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY," A RESUME OF PANAMANIAN HISTORY AND A LOOK AT TRANSITION PROCESS. APRIL 24 MORNINGS NOTE ON FRONT PAGE THAT TWO NEGOTIATORS WILL DISCUSS TREATY PROVISIONS ON CHANNEL 4 TV SAME EVENING. ITEM  
UNQUOTE

JORDEN

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